

LUCIFER.

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THE LIGHT-BEARER.

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WHOLE NO. 978

Women in Reform Journalism.

No longer ago than some of us can remember but few women were employed in journalistic work, and those who were so employed had their work limited to home departments, fashion notes, children's corners, etc., and were supposed to be entirely ignorant of the political and social problems of the day.

George Sand, George Eliot, and others who sought through their books to portray life as it is, were tabooed by society and their writings spoken of as unfit to be discussed in polite circles.

But we have the voice of history to tell us that in all reform movements women have always come to the front. Their innate love of justice, their pity for the oppressed, have made them ready to do and dare in the interests of humanity. In our own country the great slave question aroused women as nothing had ever done, and our women, who had dwelt in the seclusion of their homes, having never known more of public life than pertains to social customs, found they could use both tongue and pen in the interest of their dark-skinned brethren.

In temperance work women showed zeal if not judgment, and many political papers have been owned and edited by women.

Woman is just awakening to her capabilities and responsibilities. She has been bound by superstition so long, is such a convert to priestcraft and statecraft, that she is apt to cling to the old idea that God and Government are one and the same. Once let her be brought to understand the true state of affairs and she will cast aside her prejudices and work for the freedom of the race.

Right here is the work for women, in reform journalism. If they cannot own and edit their own papers they can write for those edited by others. Articles written by women for women are always eagerly read, and the publications which secure good writers (and we have some good writers among women of advanced thought) will do a great deal toward educating and elevating humanity. We owe a great deal to such women as Lillian Harman, Lois Waisbrocker, Emma Goldman and others who grapple with the social problem with all the zeal and earnestness of true reformers.

Social and political reforms are closely allied. Following along both these lines, women will enter the field of reform literature with proper ideas of the gravity and magnitude of the work. With her keen perceptions and intuitive grasp of situations she will wield an influence beyond that of all past endeavor. Orators sway the multitude as much by their voice and gestures as by the sentiments they express; but the written word, fresh from the heart and pen of the reformer, enters the homes of the masses, is read and pondered over in the quiet of the evening hour, and its influence, like that of the sunshine, surely and permanently does its work.

MYRA PEPPER.

The Letter of the Law in England.

The prisons of England will shortly be filled with Nonconformists who conscientiously object to the payment of a church school rate—a tax which has always been paid in England, but which under the new education act has been increased and for the first time levied in a direct form, which now makes protest possible. This, however, is a religious question, and martyrdoms, voluntary and otherwise, have been common in all countries wherever an exclusive sect has obtained a legal monopoly in the State.

In Ireland eviction scenes have become too familiar to be noticed, but a public-spirited protest against landlordism by a millionaire tenant who cannot be evicted from his holding is a newer sight and one worth noticing.

In London the terminable lease system has become an outrage on common sense. No landlord will sell his property outright; many titled landlords have no power to do so if they so desired. Laws still exist which were made in feudal times, centuries before the pressure of population on the limited land in small areas like England made freedom of choice a very limited or non-existent factor. One of the obvious consequences of the artificial and State-made barriers to free trade in land is that the landlord possesses powers with which no living being should be trusted. The fact that in a certain number of years the land reverts to the landlord destroys much of the freedom of the tenant; and it must be remembered that the landlords of England are mostly free from all knowledge of the enterprise and strenuous striving for progress in business which the merchant's busy life teaches him. To this add the feudal environment and aristocratic temperament which hang like a pall upon the "nobility" and all that is "theirs" (the earth is the lord's in England); it will then be easily understood that an estate is at once a kingdom and a treasury to the owner.

The bulk of the land in London is owned by half a dozen men like the Duke of Bedford, who is empowered by law to charge toll on a farmer's load of vegetables in the public street unable to enter the proprietary market of Covent Garden, which the ducal parsimony keeps small and inadequate like it has been for centuries.

So difficult is it to obtain a site in London that Mr. Tree in building His Majesty's Theatre has had to agree to terms of lease which prevent him affixing a "sign or notice of business" on the front of his theatre—terms which probably no other theatre proprietor in the world has had to agree to.

Mr. John Lewis, millionaire, owner of one of the largest dry-goods stores in London, has for years fought the Duke of Portland, who owns the land on which Lewis' stores are built, for which land John Lewis has already paid many millions of dollars in rent. A few years ago Lewis spent over \$500,000 in re-

building his stores, adding thereto two shops which had previously been workrooms and dwelling houses. The Duke's estate commissioners ignored the rebuilding until completed, and then insisted on the restoration of the ancient, unhealthy, inconvenient dwelling houses and the consequent destruction of the handsome, substantial, modern, wholesome buildings erected in their place.

John Lewis has protested year after year, the Duke's commissioners moving in the slow courts of England and obtaining injunction after injunction, which Lewis has consistently ignored. The Duke has at length taken more drastic measures and has succeeded in obtaining an order of the court committing John Lewis to prison, let it be noted, not for disobeying a landlord, but for contempt of court in disobeying the court which ordered him to obey the landlord. This is the only offense in England for which an illimitable sentence of imprisonment is possible, and Mr. Lewis has the alternative of obeying or suffering incarceration for life. John Lewis is a member of the London County Council, and a veteran Liberal, over 60 years of age. He has decided to go to prison and spend the remainder of his life in jail if there is no better way of protesting against the landlord's legal intimidation and blackmail.

In Brixton jail, London, John Lewis, millionaire, remains in the solitary confinement which makes English jail life a torture worthy of the Inquisition.

In Oxford street, London, the largest store in the finest street in the most fashionable quarter of London is placarded over with posters which cannot fail to make London think, and the two handsome but landlord-condemned shops are timbered up by the landlord's orders as if a siege were in progress, and John Lewis has large-lettered posters covering the wooden beams, telling the reasons why these things are so. The posters on John Lewis' premises are quoted below to enable Lucifer's readers to judge of the spirit in which this fight is being waged.

The Prime Minister of England, Mr. Balfour, on being asked in Parliament if he would release John Lewis, expressed his entire concurrence with the incarceration. Perhaps a new administration (which may not be far off) may take a different view, perhaps ill health may compel Lewis to give way, but in any event he has struck a blow against his native land laws which will not easily be forgotten.

The Land Reform Association of England is taking up the case and it should mean a new supply of recruits to the banner of the Single Taxers, and cannot fail to interest those thinkers who, while regarding Henry George's panacea as only touching the fringe of reform, must always welcome the advent of a Man (even a millionaire man) who follows his convictions wherever they lead him.

GEORGE BEDBOOUGH.

"The Trustees of the Portland Estate.—Mr. William George Frederick Cavendish Bentinck, Sir Arthur Edward Augustus Ellis, Mr. Edward Horsman Bailey—who are pleased to call themselves a Committee of Management, deny the owner of these premises the right to make reasonable use thereof. This is a shameful abuse of a law which is itself a national disgrace.—John Lewis."

"Mr. John Lewis, L. C. C., builder and owner of these premises, is threatened with imprisonment and the confiscation of his property by the Board of Management of the Portland estate—Major General Sir Arthur Edward Augustus Ellis, K.C.V.O., C.S.I.; Mr. William George Frederick Cavendish Bentinck, Mr. Edward Horsman Bailey. The history of this incredible abuse of land laws, which are themselves an offense to every self-respecting Englishman, will later on be published, together with all the correspondence pro bono publico.—John Lewis."

"The present ownership of the big landed estates is the outcome of conquest and confiscation by the Norman freebooters,

supplemented by rapacious and licentious monarchs, which must be followed by bad cultivation, bad dwellings, and bad morals.—John Lewis."

"Whatever the law, the facts remain, and this letter gives the lie to the statement that when I rebuilt Nos. 16-17 Holles street as they now exist the surveyor to the Portland estate never contemplated their being incorporated with the main block of my business premises:

"Portland Office, Queen Anne Street, London, W.
4th June, 1889.

"Portland Estate, Re Holles Street—Dear Sir: I had an interview with the trustees yesterday and laid before them your letter of the 30th May, with the memorandum which you left with me as to the terms of the proposed new leases, all of which were thoroughly considered by the trustees.

"The trustees feel that, having regard to the terms of the leases which have been granted to other tenants under somewhat similar circumstances, they cannot extend the terms of the intended leases of the premises Nos. 21 to 26 Holles street; but with a view to a possible future connection of the premises Nos. 16 and 17 with the premises adjoining southward by rebuilding at some future date, the trustees agree to extend the term of those two houses to the same length as that of the remainder so as to expire at Lady Day, 1954, as is the case with the other premises. Your obedient servant, Charles Fowler."

—Mr. John Lewis."

"It is only righteous that a tenant should enjoy fixity of tenure at a fair rent, for landlords are not the absolute owners of the earth; they hold land in trust for the community, and their duty is to afford every facility for the profitable use of the land held by the tenant. Landlords cannot have any equitable right to harass or hinder the industry of tenants, whose labor is the source of the landlords' wealth.—John Lewis."

"Land is the basis of industry. Is there any reason why land should not be free as machinery, or ships, or household furniture, or cattle, or the goods and manufactures in your warehouses? If freedom be the law of right and of wisdom with respect to all these kinds of property, how should the reverse of freedom be any other than the law of mischief and injury when applied to land?"—John Bright.

"278-288 Oxford Street, and 16-28 Holles Street, and Cavendish Buildings, W.

"With the above weighty words before them, the attention of thoughtful Englishmen is called to the extraordinary case of Bailey versus Lewis. It is important that Londoners should realize what it is for five millions of people to live on the sufferance of a mere handful of aristocratic land-owners.

"The prolonged stoppage of Mr. Lewis' building operations by Mr. William George Frederick Cavendish Bentinck, Major General Ellis and Mr. Edward Horsman Bailey, the trustees of the Portland estate, Marylebone, is a shameful abuse of the present unsatisfactory state of the law affecting land owner and building owner, their object being to impose arbitrary alterations in the plans approved by their ex-surveyor.

"For twelve years past two of Mr. Lewis' houses rated at £600 per annum have stood empty, and he is still prevented from turning them to profitable account; neither is he allowed to make full use of his newly erected Oxford street and Holles street premises.

"If, however, English law were common sense the ground-landlord would have no more right to the buildings than to the stock in trade, seeing that he contributes no more to the one than to the other.

"These gentlemen have deliberately and of set purpose inflicted a heavy loss on Mr. Lewis amounting to thousands of pounds, and now they add insult to injury by applying to the Court of Chancery for his imprisonment, because he, a tenant of thirty years' standing, and paying over £2,000 a year ground rent, refuses to become the sport of their caprice; for it is not contended that he has contemplated doing anything prejudicial to adjoining owners.

"The terminable leasehold system is a curse to the country; it empowers the ground-landlords to blight the prosperity of tradesmen, and to crush their hope for the reward of their own industry. Their pernicious influence fosters corruption in the craven-hearted and mean-spirited among our local authorities, and the intrigues of their agents render it incumbent upon every public-spirited man to be ever on the watch. The London leaseholders are hustled and shoved about with less consideration than a ground-landlord would show for his sheep.

"When unfair advantage is taken by the ground-landlord of the necessities of a tenant, and arbitrary covenants are imposed, whereby he is hindered from the reasonable use of the land he occupies, such impositions ought not to be held good in law."

"It is inequitable that ground-landlords should be allowed to impose the condition that a tenant shall not claim the protection of the law against injury done by adjoining owners if sanctioned by the ground-landlord."

"Let us pray for a leader who will set us free from the bondage of the high and mighty landed aristocracy; they never have been, and never will be, the disinterested friends of the healthy-minded industrial classes. Let London, with her wealth and intelligence, be an example to the country, and call for a manly and united resistance to landlord tyranny, that the many be no longer compelled to pay tribute to the favored few who neither toll nor spin.—John Lewis."

"The evil of the overcrowding of the people can never be effectually abated so long as owners of land in towns are permitted to levy a tax upon the whole community, by way of an increase of rent proportionate to the increased value of that land, due not to any efforts of theirs, but to the industry and consequent prosperity of the community as a whole. This in reality is a constantly increasing tribute by the whole community of the town to the individuals who own the land.—Grey."

"To put an end to the leasehold system is not Jacobinism, is not cupidity, it is justice and common sense. It is a system that ought to be stopped. No wonder that the great ducal landlords, when a Parliamentary inquiry began, formed themselves into a league.—John Morley."

"It is astonishing that the people are so tacit in their submission to the perpetuation of the feudal system in this country so long after it has been shattered to pieces in every other country.—Richard Cobden."

"The hereditary landed aristocracy dread the moral power of small proprietors; they prefer the degradation of the tenants, and to reserve to themselves the right to pose as the absolute lords of the soil, the source of all wealth, and the rightful inheritance of the whole community.—John Lewis."

"In America the land is not cursed with feudalism; it is free to every man to buy and sell the house he lives in, and the land on which he built it, and to hand on the goodwill of the business he has created to his children, without being blackmailed by landlords or lawyers.—John Lewis."

"Wanted.—A Leaseholders' League to resist the ever-growing insolence of London's Grasping, Grinding Ground-landlords.—John Lewis."

"The Enfranchisement of the Leaseholder.—It is a great hardship upon those who, by the cultivation of their business, have created a value in their property which it did not possess before, that they should be liable in a limited time to be turned out of that property. They are very much in the condition of geese in Norfolk, who at certain times of the year are stripped of their feathers and then turned out to grow another crop.—Sir William Harcourt."

"Can it be right that the prudent citizen, who builds or buys his house, can do nothing to improve it, without first being blackmailed in solicitors' fees, to get free from arbitrary restrictions which ought never to have been imposed?—John Lewis."

"The expense of making towns habitable for the toilers who dwell in them must be thrown on the land which their toil makes valuable, without any effort on the part of its owners.—Joseph Chamberlain."

"Posterity will look back with amazement and wonder what manner of men we were to tolerate the many abuses of the land laws. America's rapid advance is due in no small degree to her having shaken off these fetters of feudalism.—John Lewis."

"The terminable leasehold system relieves ground-landlords from their due share of local taxation, and subjects leaseholders

to periodic confiscation, thereby discouraging thrift, enabling ground-landlords to compel tradesmen to buy back the goodwill acquired by a lifetime of industry, and destroying the patrimony which a man would otherwise leave to his children.—Howard Evans."

"That which a man puts upon the land rightly belongs to him, but the land itself belongs to the nation, and is only held in trust by the landlord, whose duty it is to give every facility for the profitable use thereof by the tenant.—John Lewis."

Voluntary Co-Operation.

The philosophers of last century were wont to look forward to the time in which we are now living, and prophecies were plentiful enough that with the vast improvements in machinery poverty would be almost unknown, yet here we are with our land, inventions and improved processes of production in the hands of a comparatively small portion, and the rest enslaved, working to enrich their owners, with barren sessions of legislation, and things going from bad to worse. We are as far off as ever from the era when poverty will be unknown, and it seems to be entirely owing to our adoption of wrong methods. Legislators have been weighed and found wanting, and we must try to do for ourselves what we have so long been expecting them to do for us. While politicians are squabbling over locomotive contracts, lines of railway, contracts for war material, banking, broking and speculating privileges the people are losers, and they alone are interested in reform. If the future is to be better than the past, legislation, as a great French sage has said, must consist of repealing and abolishing old acts of parliament and ancient class privileges, but in even this, perhaps, legislation will refuse to act, or will prove a failure. Political methods have broken down, and the laborers of the world must try something else, and the new method which is already commanding attention for itself is non-political or voluntary co-operation.—The Australian Radical.

Freedom of Speech.

Freedom of speech in ancient Rome and freedom of speech and printing now differ not in principle, but only in form. This freedom is the conservation of liberty, the protector of the small against the great, the indispensable condition of all social improvement; it is the real life of a nation; for what is a nation or a man unless the tongue can utter what the mind conceives and tell it to all countries and to all times? So we see that in modern states, where power is usurped, the suppression of freedom of speech always follows the usurpation, for this freedom is inconsistent with the continuance of any power which is not founded on general consent and maintained by public opinion. In a democratical constitution, where the men who hold the executive power contemplate the accomplishment of some purpose by unconstitutional means, the suppression of freedom of speech and printing is the certain sign that tyranny is approaching. The instrument that is used for this purpose is the citizen himself, who is converted into soldier, and hired at the cost of his own fellow citizens to deprive them of their liberty.—Long's "Decline of the Roman Republic."

Reform in Turkey.

A movement has been started by a Turkish princess, Hairie Ben Aiad, aided by her husband, Ali Nouri Bey, and the Armenian journalist, Pierre Anmaghian, for the emancipation of Turkish women. How she is setting about it is described by *Die Woche*, Berlin, from which *Public Opinion* translates the following: "The princess, the daughter of a Tunisian pasha who was once a rich and influential friend of the Sultan, has learned through her husband, who is of Swedish extraction, the inferior position of women in Turkey, and has given herself with great ardor to the cause of bettering their lot. Journeying with her husband and with Pierre Anmaghian as interpreter, she is holding meetings for the discussion of the woman question in Turkey. Her efforts have been confined largely to Scandinavia, but she intends to extend her propaganda into other countries. The movement has met with an exceedingly friendly reception."—*Woman's Tribune*.

It is faith in something, and enthusiasm for something, that makes a life worth looking at.—Holmes.

Lucifer, the Lightbearer

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LUCIFER—ITS MEANING AND PURPOSE.

LUCIFER—The planet Venus; so called from its brightness.—Webster's Dictionary.

LUCIFEROUS—Giving Light; affording light or the means of discovery.—Same.

LUCIFIC—Producing Light.—Same.

LUCIFORM—Having the form of Light.—Same.

The name Lucifer means Light-Bringing or Light-Bearing, and the paper that has adopted this name stands for Light against Darkness—for Reason against Superstition—for Science against Tradition—for Investigation and Enlightenment against Credulity and Ignorance—for Liberty against Slavery—for Justice against Privilege.

The Ingersoll Controversy—A Summing Up.

"The trouble with most people is they bow to what is called authority; they have a certain reverence for the old because it is old. They think a man is better for being dead, especially if he has been dead a long time."—Robert G. Ingersoll.

Do not these lines furnish ample justification for giving so much of Lucifer's limited space to a discussion of the merits and demerits of America's most famous Freethought orator?

Little did Ingersoll think, perhaps, when uttering these words, that their truth would so soon be exemplified in his own case.

All true poets are also prophets. Ingersoll was a true poet, a prose-poet, though not destitute of ability as a writer of verse. Pretty evidently he foresaw, unconsciously perhaps, that he himself would not escape the fate that had befallen nearly all the great names of the historic past; hence the note of warning just quoted.

Ingersoll knew that to make a hero of a man—to idealize, to idolize, to deify, to apotheosize a man—is the very worst thing that could happen to the cause of human progress in general and to the particular cause with which the man thus honored is or was identified.

He knew that the worshipful spirit, the unmanly, the cowering, the slavish spirit that swallows its idol whole, errors and all, has been the bane of every forward movement that has yet been inaugurated by man.

That this misfortune has already befallen organized Freethought, the movement with which Ingersoll was closely identified, is sufficiently evident from the attitude and utterances of the men who now claim to represent that movement in the United States—as seen in the record made by the symposium, or comparison of opinions, regarding the great Agnostic orator, printed in these columns during the past three or four months.

Before proceeding further with the summing up of this symposium, I wish to present our readers with one or two more contributions thereto. The first of these is from the pen of a well-known Freethinker of this city, one who for several years was president of the Chicago Secular Union:

"I have read the various criticisms of Ingersoll recently appearing in Lucifer and am moved to remind Mr. Darrow and others that scarcely any two reformers move along the same lines. Ingersoll performed his work as he saw it, and Darrow is doing the same. Ingersoll accomplished a work that Darrow or any other man, perhaps, could not have accomplished, and Darrow is doing a work—and I believe is doing it well—which Ingersoll, perhaps, could not have done. The life of a man is not long enough to enable him to grapple with all the needed reforms of the day, and it is better, I say, for each to take up his

part of the work and accomplish something than to attempt to do it all and accomplish nothing. Ingersoll made his mistakes, but accomplished much for humanity. When Darrow's work is done it will surely be said that he has accomplished much for humanity, but that he left much undone and that he also made his mistakes. Let the dead rest in peace.

"A. E. GAMMAGE."

With the spirit or general sentiment of this letter I am in full accord. There is scarcely an element of criticism therein, unless if be in the last sentence, "Let the dead rest in peace." In the sense that we should bury all personal animosities, personal antagonism, in the tomb that hides from view the features of our honored dead, I say, Yes! most emphatically Yes.

But if used in the sense that the public utterances and acts of the dead must not be made to pass in review for commendation or reprobation, or in the sense that nothing but good should be said of the dead, I would raise my voice in earnest protest.

There is no rest in nature. Death is not rest. Death is simply change, transformation, evolution, action—not rest.

But, admitting the possibility of rest as an abstract proposition, it is morally certain that R. G. Ingersoll will not be allowed to rest, either by friends or foes. "Being dead, he yet speaketh," and I may add, Being dead, yet *acteth*. Saul of Tarsus speaks of Abraham, Lot, Noah and others as being "examples" for us to follow. Abraham, though dead some thousands of years, still continues to act whenever religious fanatic attempts to gain divine favor by the sacrifice of his child.

Jesus has been dead nineteen hundred years, but he continues to curse his race, both by precept and example. Jesus still lives in the millions of celibate men and women called priests and nuns, living an unnatural, a truly immoral life, whether they are true or false to their religious vows—setting an example that if followed would soon end in race suicide, leaving their parental obligations to be discharged by others not so well endowed—for as a rule, the best-developed women and men are set apart for the service of the Church.

But this, even, is not the worst feature of the case. By their theocratic control of sex and reproduction, based on the teachings and example of Jesus, the priesthoods secure a race of mental and moral dwarfs, imbeciles, fit subjects to be ruled and robbed by the Church, and by its twin brother, the State.

This is only one of the ways by which the dead Jesus—whom I regard as a victim, or invention, of priesthood—continues to curse the world he is said to have come to save. By his parable of the "talents" he gives aid and comfort to the money monopolists, the usurers. By his habit of depending on miracles, or on the labor of others for his daily bread he discouraged thrift, manly independence and encouraged vagrancy and mendicancy.

"Take no thought for the morrow," "Consider the lilies of the field," etc. have helped to fill the world with professional beggars, tramps and thieves, and the bankrupt atonement doctrine, upon which his whole scheme of salvation rests, gives encouragement to embezzlers, boodlers, cheats, swindlers of every grade and shade.

All this, and much more that might be said in the same line, has happened because, as quoted in the outset of this article, "people bow to authority; they have a certain reverence for the old because it is old. They think a man is better for being dead, especially if he has been dead a long time." Jesus was regarded as authority because of the alleged miracles wrought by him, or in his name; also because of his ascetic life and tragic death. Ingersoll was not an ascetic nor a wonder-worker, but his power to draw crowds of people by his eloquence and by his personal magnetism was probably as great as, if not greater than, that of the semi-historic, semi-fabulous Nazarene, and now that Ingersoll is numbered with the dead, a strong effort is being made by some

of his admirers to make of him a hero, an ideal man, to be revered and honored as the highest authority, the patron saint if not the tutelar deity of the "new dispensation," the Freethought propaganda.

And thus it will doubtless come to pass that the example and sayings of Robert G. Ingersoll will continue to live and get in their work in molding the characters and directing the conduct of millions now living, and also of millions of the yet unborn—for good or ill, for weal or woe, for progress or for retrogression.

If the followers of the Nazarene had used their common sense and had discriminated between the good and the bad in their leader, his example and doctrines would not have had the baleful effect upon humanity and progress that they have exerted and still exert. Will the admirers of Ingersoll follow blindly in the steps of the hero worshipers?—Christians, Mohammedans, Confucians, Buddhists, Mormons, Edyites, Dowieites, etc?

* * *

It has been my intention, as chairman of the meeting, to bring the discussion of Ingersoll as an exponent of Freethought to a close with this present issue, but circumstances are against me. The lateness of the hour and press of other good matter have compelled a further postponement of the summing up of this somewhat prolonged symposium—a discussion of principles so important to the work Lucifer and its friends are trying to do that it is believed the space devoted thereto could not have been better occupied.

M. HARMAN.

Shall We Laugh or Cry?

Under the head, "On Picket Duty," I find the following paragraph in Lucifer's New York contemporary, *Liberty*:

"My jovial and lazy friend, Lucian V. Pinney of Winsted, Conn., gives excellent advice to *Liberty*'s Chicago contemporary, Lucifer, which rarely 'cracks a smile': You should have a 'fat contributor'—one who does not take to reform with such everlasting seriousness. Admit that the world deserves to be scolded at and preached at, but know also that there are occasions when it should be laughed at; and, if the grim gladiators see nothing in the world to laugh at, let them some time take a day off and look at each other. Reform need not always wear the melancholy look of one about to have a tooth extracted, nor the lean and hungry look of Cäsar, nor the wrathful attitude of a woman cleaning house, nor yet the monstrous profundity of the preacher ready to 'bust' into utterance about Christ and Him Crucified. Is there then no laughing 'child among ye taking notes?' Pinney is absolutely right, yet after all Harman may know his business. Perhaps he has discovered that on this side of the Atlantic laughter is deadly only to laugher. I haven't Pinney's wonderful capacity for laughter, but am rapidly approaching him in rotundity of paunch, and both of us seek communion with the Latin soul, wherever it may have found its incarnation. Whereas Harman, on the other hand, talks only to good Americans, and knows that no truly good American ever understood Voltaire."

* * *

"Way back in the early fifties of last century I knew a pilot on a huge Missouri steamer who had gained the sobriquet of "Pontius Pilate" (paunchious pilot!) because of his enormous girth, or length of bellyband. Of course everybody liked Pontius—"the prince of good fellows," as most fat men are.

Unfortunately for me, my girth is about thirty inches—indicating a plentiful lack of the "rotundity of paunch" that seems to be characteristic of Brothers Pinney and Tucker, and with my temperament I cannot hope ever to be ranked among the good fellows who "laugh and grow fat."

This is by no means the first time, however, that I have been charged with overmuch seriousness. From early boyhood onward I have been constantly reminded that life has its funny as well as its sober side, and that a good, hearty laugh now and then is conducive to health, happiness and longevity. Phrenologists have

often urged me to cultivate the organ called "Wit," saying that the lack of the "humorous" vein is a serious defect in my mental make-up.

Looking for causes, as is my wont, in addition to the "nervous" temperament just alluded to, I charge this mental defect to heredity, to early education and early environment. Born to a heritage of poverty (economic)—born heir to a theologic creed that postulates an eternity of hopeless suffering for the non-elect, I saw but little in life to encourage a laughing mood. Whether I regarded myself as numbered with the elect, the pardoned, or not, made little difference. With a naturally affectionate, emotional, sympathetic make-up, I could not bear the idea of accepting heaven for myself if my friends were to be shut up in hell. Let me share their fate, whether it be hell or heaven, was my creed.

Hence I was not surprised to learn that the Nazarene never laughed; that he was called "The man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," since the burden of his gospel was "Strait is the gate and narrow the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it," and, "wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." "Many are called; few are chosen." "These shall go away into everlasting punishment prepared for the devil and his angels." "How shall ye escape the damnation of hell?"

This is the gospel of pessimism, of death and despair, worse than that of Schopenhauer, the gospel of damnation—of hell in the original packages, so to speak—consequently a gospel that calls for "weeping and wailing," and not for smiles and joyous laughter.

* * *

One of the most potent causes that drove me from the church was the terrible lack of agreement between the professed belief and the daily deportment of church goers. "How can you," I mentally queried, "how is it possible that you church people can be smiling and jovial—cheerful and happy—trivial, witty and even hilarious, when you know that many of your acquaintances, many even of your nearest and dearest friends, are now writhing in the flames of never-ending hell, or at least are in great danger of such fate? Your belief is mere pretense, else you are awfully lacking either in humanity or sanity, or both."

For a very similar reason, I find it hard to be glad, smiling, cheerful, witty or joyous, *knowing*—not simply believing—that a very large per cent of the people now living in human bodies are in "hell"—a hell of physical or mental suffering and that for many of these damned ones there is absolutely *no hope*, except such hope as may be offered by the "death angel."

The truly great, because truly altruistic and sympathetic, Horace Mann once lectured on the theme, "Where Do God's Children Dwell?" With his wide experience and observation none knew better than he that a very large proportion of the children—the grown up children as well as infants—now on this planet are living in hell. Horace Mann labored, wrote, lectured, lived and died in the hope and belief that the free school system of which he was the great apostle, would do much to abolish the hells of this world. Were he living to-day he would doubtless see and acknowledge that a reform more fundamental than that of popular education is needed to remove the hells of our so-called civilization. He would see and know that the foundations upon which these hells are built—monopoly of money, monopoly of land, monopoly of machinery and transportation, and, worst of all, because underlying and producing all the others, *monopoly of sex*, control and regulation of sex and reproduction by Church, State and Grundy—he would see that all these foundations and feeders of earthly hells are quite as firmly fixed and secure to-day as before the inauguration of the public free school system, if not more so.

Yes, the world owes much to that robust, rebel, yet very politic and conventional representative of the "Latin soul," Voltaire, who by the shafts of ridicule brought the Church to its knees and compelled a reconstruction of its methods of fighting heretics and heresy, but what of that other Latin soul, represented by Monsignor Pecci, now slowly dying in the Vatican? If Voltaire were dying to-day, would the world he helped to liberty of conscience honor him as it now honors the man who nearly died of grief and mortification because of the honors paid to heresy when Bruno's monument was unveiled in Rome a few years ago? The story is told that the Pope lay all day on the cold stone floor of the Vatican to express his grief and horror because of the rebuke administered by the secular government to himself and to his church by honoring one of the most distinguished of that church's victims, the inhumanly murdered Giordano Bruno.

Even in America, the so-called Land of Freedom, the Latin soul representing the greatest of all the enemies of freedom and equality, the Roman Church, receives a thousand fold more honor than does the memory of Bruno and Voltaire, who worked so hard and long, each in his own way, to make freedom and justice possible, showing that something besides laughter is needed to destroy the despotism of religious superstition.

Whether Democritus, the laughing Greek, or his great rival, Heraclitus, the weeping man, was the better philosopher there is room for difference of opinion, but if the legend be true which says that George Washington never smiled during the seven years he commanded the "Continental army," that fact would be to me proof of his sanity and humanity, rather than of the reverse, and, finally, I confess to much sympathy and respect with and for the Hebrew prophet who prayed that his head might be waters and his eyes a fountain of tears, because he saw so much to cause weeping and so little to provoke laughter.

M. HARMAN.

Book Reviews.

For more than three years we have tried hard to get a supply of "Cityless and Countryless World," by Henry Olerich, to fill orders. The book seems to have been long out of print. Now we are prepared to fill the orders already received, also a few new ones, and hope we shall not again disappoint any applicant for this splendid conception of better, more rational, social, economic and political systems than those in force on Earth to-day.

"Cityless and Countryless World," as many of our readers know, is written in a lively conversational style, and is not a dull, didactic, dogmatic or pedantic homily upon the evils of our present societary systems. The principal speaker is supposed to be a traveler whose home is on our neighboring planet, Mars. As a fair sample of the author's style and trend of thought, I copy a paragraph in which Mr. Midith, the Marsian traveler, contrasts some of the social customs of his native planet with those he finds on Earth:

"1—You marry for life; we do not. 2—Your Church and State interfere with your sexual affairs; we leave it in the hands of the individual. 3—Our women are not financially dependent on the man; yours, as a rule, are. 4—Our women have the privilege of soliciting the love of any man whose sexual co-operation they desire; yours have not. 5—In a state of sexual freedom, the woman regulates her own sexual affairs to suit herself; in a state of marriage, or, in other words, interference of Church and State, the man or husband largely runs the sexual affairs to suit himself, the same as he runs the financial and political affairs. 6—We invariably room alone, both men and women; under your marriage system your husband and wife invariably room and lodge together. 7—You make your women dependent creatures by not financially compensating maternal labor the same as mining, farming, etc.; we make her independent because we pay her the same compensation for maternal work as we do for any other

labor. 8—You shift the burden of maternal cares almost exclusively off onto the mother, while we act on the supposition that we have all received parental care during our infancy, and that in turn we should do the same for someone else, whether we are parents or not; to neglect this would make us shirks, for we would not be paying for what we received during our infancy. 9—We teach the laws of sexuality to our children of all ages; you try to hide all knowledge of it. Hence we make intelligence the safeguard of sexual purity, while you make ignorance its safeguard."

"Cityless and Countryless World" is a large book for the price—\$1, postpaid, 447 pages; beautifully bound in red silk cloth. In paper binding, 50 cents. Orders filled here.

"The Bible. By John E. Remsburg. Large 12mo. 500 pages. Cloth, \$1.25 net. The Truth Seeker Company, 28 Lafayette place, New York, has published a new book about the Bible by John E. Remsburg, the well-known Liberal lecturer and writer. It contains eleven chapters on the authenticity of the Bible, based on the best authorities of the time; thirteen on the credibility of the Bible, ten on the morality of the Bible, and an appendix in which Mr. Remsburg sets forth unanswerable arguments against the divine origin and in favor of the human origin of the Bible. Twenty-six pages of index enable the reader to instantly refer to any authority quoted or argument used. Mr. Remsburg is one of the most careful, accurate and painstaking writers, and his book is a compendium of the latest scholarship and rationalistic thought on the subject. The late Colonel Ingersoll began his famous lecture on the Bible by saying, 'Some one ought to tell the truth about the Bible.' This Mr. Remsburg has done—done it fully, and done it well. Rationalists will welcome this work, though the clergy will probably antagonize it strongly."

The above is the "Literary Note" sent out by the publishers. Not having had time to give the work a thorough perusal, I will only add that so far as read the book seems the result of much careful research and will doubtless take the place of a "classic" in regard to the collection of old-time books, or booklets, known as *Ho Biblos*, "the book."

On one point, however, I feel constrained to enter a decided protest, and that is Brother Remsburg's treatment of what is called "obscenity." When a well-known French astronomer was asked why he left "God" out of his book he replied, "I had no need of that hypothesis." Just so, as it seems to me, the philosophic Freethinker has no need of the hypothesis, the concept, called obscenity, in his moral code.

That there is abuse, perversion, of the facts and functions of the human body we all know, but the words "obscene" and "obscenity" indicate that certain facts and functions are so inherently vile that they must not be mentioned under pain of social ostracism or of legal punishment.

The logical Freethinker recognizes no words as "blasphemous," and for a like reason his vocabulary knows nothing of "obscenity." Blasphemy and obscenity are equally the product of ignorance and superstition in regard to the basic facts of nature and of life.

M. H.

The industrial combat is one obscured and terrible, where the strong oppress the weak, where property overwhelms labor by the weight of its prerogatives. The proprietors have the power of giving in exchange for labor only the least possible wage. The one side always dictates the law; the other side is always constrained to receive it.—Necker.

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VARIOUS VOICES.

Howard Tuttle, Clinton, Iowa.—Find inclosed \$1. Am sorry it is not one hundred dollars instead of one!

C. F. Hunt, Norwood Park, Ill.—I have met many who deny responsibility. Responsibility to what or to whom? Absolute freedom would permit only fear of retaliation of others equally free; and discretion—the impulse to avoid such retaliation.

Belle Chapel, Leroy, Pa.—There is some talk of having a colony of enlightened people at Hawk's Park, Fla., in the near future. When preparations are made notices will be printed in the Liberal papers. The plan is to get settlers who want homes of their own and who are able and willing to work. With machinery and land a comfortable living would be available to many people who are now living in crowded cities, not knowing where the next meal is to come from.

E. W. Chamberlain, New York.—It has always seemed to me that too little is said in praise of that magnificent pioneer, E. H. Heywood. No nobler duty devolves upon us than to hand down to future generations the principles of purity and morality which Heywood forfeited so much to propagate. In honoring Heywood we honor ourselves. How can we expect that the future will honor us, or even remember us, if we forget Heywood and his unselfish sacrifices for the higher morality he preached? I think the change in name of the autobiography would be an improvement. I hope to see it finished this summer. You certainly ought to leave the world a history of the great fight you have made for freedom in a shape more convenient for reference than the scattered and broken files of Lucifer. I have a complete file of Lucifer from 1887 to date. I wonder how many more such are in existence. There ought to be one in every historical library. James F. Morton of Home, Wash., talks of writing a story of the persecutions of the Home colonists. His book and yours will come in good time to be considered in connection with the scandals in the Postoffice Department.

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